

## Four touristy NYC hotels to skip, And where to stay instead

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Millions of people will visit New York City this year, and lots of them will stay at big box hotels.

In a city with so many choices, it's easy to gravitate towards the famous chains. There's nothing wrong with that, but some of the bigger hotels tend to be super crowded, and could really use a refresh. We've taken a look at some popular choices for tourists, and found some lesser-known alternatives to consider for your next trip to New York City.

**Skip: New York Hilton (Midtown West)**

The Hilton name is world-famous, but this property is not the flagship. The mind-boggling number of rooms -- 1985 to be exact -- means the property feels almost as crowded as the bustling streets outside. The heavy volume of guests shows in the tired-looking hallways and rooms (with the exception of a small chunk of rooms that have been renovated recently).

**Stay: The Moderne**

Just a few blocks away, the 80-room Moderne offers the same convenience for getting to sights like the MoMA, Central Park and Rockefeller Center, on a much more intimate scale. The hotel was completely renovated in 2011, and the decor has a lively pop art theme. Features like stainless steel bathrooms and iPod docks make the hotel feel like a solid upgrade.

**Skip: Hotel Pennsylvania (Herald Square)**

The Hotel Pennsylvania is a historic New York City hotel -- built by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company in 1919 -- but behind those iconic columns on 7th Avenue, the property hasn't worn the years well. The carpets, beds and bathrooms all appear weathered. Some rooms even have old tube TVs. The hotel's location across the street from Penn Station and Madison Square Garden is super convenient, but there are better options for similar budgets to be found in the neighborhood.

**Stay: Eventi Hotel**

The 292-room Eventi Hotel is within walking distance of Madison Square Garden and the Empire State Building, but it's more modern and comfortable in just about every way when compared to the Pennsylvania. Rooms are spacious and beautiful, with sleek decor, flat-screen TVs, and iPod docks. The relatively new Kimpton property (it opened in 2010) has all the hallmarks of a boutique hotel: eye-catching art and design in the lobby, perks like free nightly wine hours, and an on-site farm-to-table restaurant, Humphrey's.

**Skip: Millennium Hotel Broadway (Times Square)**

With 750 rooms, a conference center and a theater, it's easy to see why the Millennium Hotel Broadway is a popular convention hotel. The property is also right off Times Square, which is bustling with tourists, business people and street vendors around the clock. While this hotel is sufficient for large meetings, there's little that stands out about it. The decor is bland, and amenities are limited to a lobby bar and fitness center.

### **Stay: Sanctuary Hotel**

If being near Times Square is important, the Sanctuary Hotel is a good choice for fun-loving guests. Unlike large chain hotels in the area, this boutique property is swanky, without being generic or stuffy. The luxe hotel is decorated with Buddhist-inspired art, and a fireplace and chandeliers in the lobby. Marble countertops and chandeliers set the rooms apart. The lounge on the ninth floor fits right in with the vibe of the hotel, and guests also get free breakfast, free Wi-Fi and free passes to Equinox.

### **Skip: Four Points By Sheraton Hotel SoHo Village**

The Four Points by Sheraton Hotel is a reliable chain property located in SoHo, just south of the West Village. It has all the amenities you'd expect from the brand, including a 24-hour business center, 24-hour gym and free Wi-Fi. The hotel is perfectly fine for business travelers or guests who just want a convenient stay, but look elsewhere to be dazzled.

### **Stay: Hugo Hotel**

A block to the west, the Hugo is a bit further from SoHo and Little Italy, but it feels much more upscale (although guests will generally pay about \$100 per night more for this). The interiors are bright and clean, and marble bathroom countertops, salvaged wood lining the hallways and an industrial-chic chandelier in the lobby pack some serious style. Even the minibars -- which include locally made Hudson Whiskey and North Fork potato chips -- are a bit bespoke. There's also a rooftop bar with great views of the Hudson River.

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